Mid - Florida Atari Computer Club Bulletin

October/November, 1995 Vol. 12, No.10/11

This is the monthly bulletin of the Mid-Florida Atari Computer Club. In it are articles written or submitted by members who feel they are of interest to all users of Atari computers.

You may wish to join a computer club to share the beneficial aspects of having others around you who have similar machines, like interests, and a desire to share what they know with others. A users group can help you understand things about your computer that they have already discovered.

Our membership, at $12.00 per year, entitles you to the newsletter, access to the disk libraries, and club meetings where all the fun and education happen on a monthly basis.

We meet in the Orlando Library building downtown Orlando, 101 E Central Blvd. At 1:30PM on the second Sunday of each month. Feel free to join us there next month to learn more about the wonderful world of computers, and Atari computers in particular.

For Newsletter Exchange

M.F.A.C.C.
C/O Bob Smith
3729 Yosemite Dr.
Orlando, FL 32818

M.F.A.C.C. Affiliated BBS Listing:

Top Gun	381-5403
Starbase*1*	381-2610
Inner Core	294-5183

Prez. Message Page 2

Minutes Page 3

Money STuff Page 4

Unabashed Atariphile Page 6

Old Atari News Page 7

Jaguar Page 9

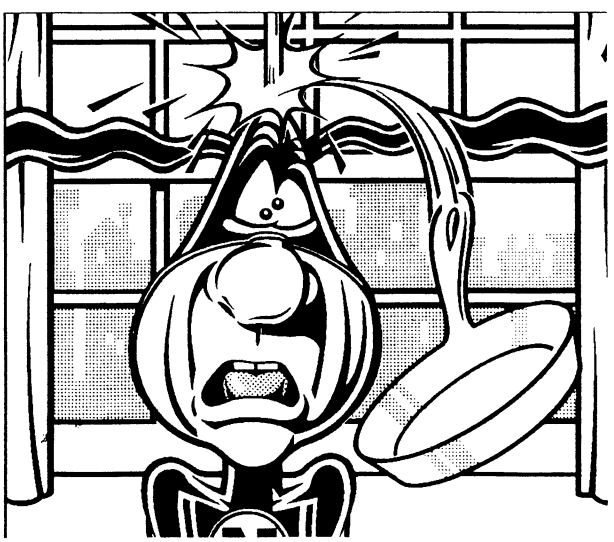
Day In, Day Out Page 10

Mead Meister Speaks Page 12

8 Bit DOM Page 12

FYI Page 15

Rare Gems Page 17



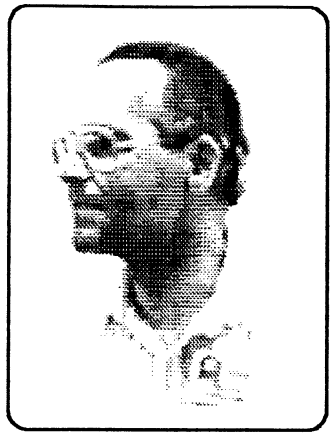
MID-FLORIDA ATARI COMPUTER CLUB

From The President

The November, 95 President's Missive

Well, we made it till coool weather one more time. That Yankee breeze is sliding down across central Florida, giving us something to be thankful for. Cooler days and nights will mean we have more energy when we finish the workday. Longer periods of darkness will mean there is less time to do things outside the house, and we will be able to justify to our spouse why we are spending more time in the computer room. Not enough light out there to cut the grass tonite, hon, have to catch it on Saturday,I guess. I'll just be in here putting our Christmas card list together on the old computer. Nuthin to watch on the tele anyhow!See if it works for you, it does for me, once in a while!Now is the time to give some thought to consolidating what you've got on that hard drive, and spending some time downloading, opening, and trying all those files you've scanned on the BBSthese past months, but didn't have time to dp anything with. Also a good time to sit down with all tyhose checks you've written all year, and list them and their amounts in categories to get ready for taxtime right after the first of the year. DataManager or Swiftcalc would be great programs to use for that purpose.Christmas is also coming, and I'm going to ask our two librarians to search for music players and carols to offer for our December disks. I love to sit back and listen to the Atari chorus chiming away in the corner, the smell of the bayberry candles smoking onthe monitor, a nice fake fire in the fake fireplace (it was 82degrees last Christmas day, after all!)Well, anyway I've still got something to be thankful for this season, anyway, and that is that John Morrison will still open up a piece of my Atari equipment and repair it for me. Even if Atari USA has turned its back on its loyal computer lovers, we have John. And, of course, each other. As our ranks grow smaller, we band together to have fun, and to learn, and to share!

See you next time.Your President, (First and middle names of your choice, BAKER



)(Is this really Bill Baker after surgery?)

Minutes Of The M.F.A.C.C. General Meeting

September 1995

M.F.A.C.C.
Meeting Minutes
September 10th, 1995

Vice President Jeff Potter called the meeting to order at 3:05pm with 6 members in attendance.

The business meeting opened with a discussion about meeting length and meeting time as well as how to survey the membership with regard to their preferences about the above... Which led to a discussion about the membership list which Bob Smith will post on Innercore. Bob Smith made a plea for more articles for the newsletter. Concerns were raised about Robert Raymonds absence from meetings recently. The discussion was tabled until the October meeting. An interesting and lengthy discussion ensued about an Atari 8 bit CDROM that is available for $50.00. The conversation included:
1.) How to play on 8 bit.
2.) How to take the data off the CDROM and make it available to the MFACC library.
3.) Was there any copyright material on the CDROM.
Bob Smith made a motion to continue research on the CDROM and its use to MFACC which was seconded and affirmitavly voted. Bob Smith will donate ST Intro to the library. It will be the September Disk of the Month. \David Steinberg absolved himself of all responsibility for the club ST equipment due to lack of storage space. He is keeping it until the October meeting when a suitable storage site can be found. An idea was put forward to expand the club membership by changing the club focus to include all orphaned systems instead of just focusing on the Atari. This discussion touched upon many points (some sore) and was tabled for further discussion at the October meeting. By 3:52 everyone was winded and the business meeting was adjourned. Many thanks to all the participants!

Some phone numbers you will need to communicate with our club:

PRESIDENT
BILL BAKER

VICE PRESIDENT
JEFF POTTER

ACTING SECRETARY
RUSS WHIDEN

TREASURER
DAVID STEINBERG

Librarians:

8 - Bit
Jeff Pott er
(407) 356 -8 680

ST Library
Bob Smith
(407) 299-5374

This newsletter is produced on an Atari Mega ST-4, using Pagestream 2.2 and printed on a Hewlett Packard Deskjet 500

Treasurer's Report
September 1995

Opening balance for checking	$562.02
Deposit	00.00
Service charge	10.00
Ending Balance	$552.02
Cash On Hand	$ 52.00
As of September 30, 1995	

Please note: The Treasurer has not reported the October, 95 figures at press time and is hereby fined $2.31 by the Editor.

Birthdays for November

Charles Smyth *Robert Raymond*
Larry Regan

What do you want for X-mas?

(How about New Members?)

Ole Saint Nick...

This space for rent.

Sell your stuff here.

Money and Buyers are waiting.

Hey Bob. This bird is for you!

We Need Something to fill this spac

HEY, HERE'S AN IDEA: HOW ABOUT AN ARTICLE

The Unabashed Atariophile
By: Michael R. Burkley
Delphi: MRBURKLEY GEnie: M.BURKLEY1

(Editor's Note: This is reprinted from Atari Explorer Online Magazine, issue #0408. This is an excellent review, enjoy!!!)

I'm late again in getting this review to Travis. The older I get the faster time seems to go (I just turned 40 years old last month how can that be?!). In any case I only have one software review for you this issue. To make up for this lack I have a review of Richard Karsmakers' The Ultimate Virus Killer Book."Next issue I'll try to do better by having more software reviews. (I think I've said this before!)

Here's my one software review of this issue....

[] MUSIC4_3 is a working demo of Music Box v.4.3 by Kari Heimonen (dated August 1995). This is an excellent and detailed database for keeping track of your record, CD, and tape collection (this demo is limited to 60 records, CD's and/or tapes). What information would you wish to include about your record collection? The authors? The Song Titles? The Play Time? The value of the record and its condition? Your personal evaluation of the record? What ones you've lent out? (good luck in getting the good ones back!), or more. You can do all of this with the Music Box! English Docs and online help available. Mouse controlled.

It will work on all ST--Falcon machines (even a 520 ST, though you will be limited to less than 700 records - I don't have that many in \my collection!). You can also print out all of your data on any Epson compatible printer. Color or mono. This will run from a floppy or hard drive. To run it from a hard drive you must place the included RECORD folder (where your data is stored) in the root directory of whichever drive you use. The remaining files in this archive may be placed in any other folder and run from there. Geneva compatible. Delphi.

Last time I told you that I was going to give you a review of Richard Karsmakers new book The 'Ultimate Virus Killer' Book."Amazingly enough I'm going to do that. Of course, you could always just go out and buy it and skip the review. You'd get an excellent read that much sooner!

Several months ago I saw an online ad by Richard Karsmakers touting his upcoming book. In case you don't know, Richard has written and is constantly updating a superb virus detection and killing program named The Ultimate Virus Killer (UVK). I had recently purchased UVK because of all the scores of PD programs I go through each month. Unfortunately the program has proven useful. That made me even more interested in the book. I found the cash, sent it off, and waited anxiously for the book. The wait was worth it! I think I've read it through twice now, and it is so jampacked with interesting and amusing information that I'll likely keep picking it up in the future.

The book arrived in my mailbox from the Netherlands shortly after I ordered it (the Post Office isn't so slow after all - sometimes!). It is an 8 x 6 inch (about) softcover book of almost 200 pages. I appreciate the binding because it easily allows the book to be laid flat. The print is a little small for my eyes, but not overly much so, and having it larger would only expand an already large book unnecessarily. Overall, I thought the composition of the book was well-done. More importantly, the information in it is even better!

Richard Karsmakers is a student of English at Utrecht University in the Netherlands. He doesn't claim to be an elegant programmer (his code works, and works well, which is his justification to his fellow programmers), but he is a dedicated Atariophile and articulate author. UVK has gone through numerous versions since its original incarnation in 1987, each an improvement on the other. Now fully multitasking friendly, ST--Falcon compatible, this program recognizes scores of boot-sector viruses (viruses that hide on the boot sector of your floppy disk) and link viruses (those that insert themselves right inside your program's code). By some insightful programming, the author has even allowed his program to recognize viruses that haven't even been written yet! How's that for looking ahead!

Richard has obviously either not read many computer manuals and books or has ignored their examples completely when writing this book. Doesn't he know that manuals are supposed to be boring and dry, and almost completely unintelligible to the average computer layperson? The Ultimate Virus Killer Book" reminds me of David Small's reviews and the manual for his SST board, and Ralph C. Turner's Atari books. Stories that make me want to laugh, and stories that make me want to cry abound in this book. Viruses and their history on several different computer platforms are illuminated and a step-by-step history of the war between us and the virus killers on one side and the virus programmers on the other is presented.

I've really appreciated Richard's careful definition of terms, his detailed (yet clear) explanation of how viruses work, and his helps on preventing them from working on your system. In one interesting section of his book he lists all of the viruses and their characteristics that he is aware of (and which UVK kills). It's sad to think of the warped creativity of those virus programmers. It seems to me much more rewarding to program something constructive rather than program something that only destroys. <sigh> Oh well, it makes me want to pray for the world, which is a good thing!

I could detail many more things I like about this book, but I'll only mention a few more. I appreciate Richard's humor. It's not overbearing, but it does help carry the book forward. After reading this book you will likely feel that you have been offered an open door into his life. He talks about his schooling, his jobs, the love of his life (congratulations Karin!), and more. I also

(CONT'D ON NEXT PAGE----->)

appreciate his ability to tell just enough about virus programming to help me understand what is possible and yet not tell enough to make it easy for someone to program a virus (unlike a German magazine which once included detailed instructions on how to create a virus dumb!). The book is fully up-to-date, having only been finished in July.

I haven't mentioned that he has included the expanded manual for the Ultimate Virus Killer program in his book. Astounding!

I would recommend The Ultimate Virus Killer Book to you all. It's an education in things Atari for both the novice and the advanced programmer. But if you want to get this book you have to act quickly. It will only be available through December 31, 1995. You must order directly through the author.

What's the cost? It's $25 U.S., and I think it's well worth it. It can be ordering only by cash (all the world) or a United Kingdom cheque. No non-UK checks are acceptable (they cost more to cash than they pay - I know!). Send your orders to:

Richard Karsmakers
P.O.Box 67
NL-3500 AB Utrecht
The Netherlands

EMail: r.c.karsmakers@ud.let.ruu.nl

Let's all do our parts to destroy viruses on our platform!

That's all for now folks! Take care. I'm always

Michael Burkley
The Unabashed Atariophile,

All of these files can be found on one or more of the following on-line services: Delphi (MRBURKLEY), GEnie (M.BURKLEY1), Toad Computers BBS (410 544-6999), and at Toad Hall, the official BBS of the Boston Computer Society (617-567-8642) (as Michael R. Burkley).

(Editor's Note: Michael lives in Niagara Falls, NY. He is a former Polyurethane Research Chemist and is presently the pastor of the Niagara \Presbyterian Church.)

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"Old Atari News"

(Or It isn't What You Think)

By: John Hardie

No, this isn't a column of old news about Atari. Basically, this column will cover new items of interest to the owners of older Atari 8-bit, 2600/5200/7800, or Lynx machines. News of new products, upgrades, etc., will be noted as I find out about them. If you have something of interest to your fellow Atarians with these machines, please contact me on GEnie at EXPLORER.3 or Internet >explorer.3genie.com<.

At times this column might resemble an advertisement for Best Electronics or B&C Computervisions. Let me assure you that this is strictly due to the fact that these two reputable dealers are the only people that have any parts or equipment for most of the listed machines. With that out of the way, let's see what's new.

//// Atari 8-bit news

If you're currently running 80 columns with the XEP-80, you should know about an upgrade to the XEP-80 to allow you to use an IBM TTL monitor, which are both plentiful and cheap. Designed by the masterful Bob Wooley, this simple upgrade taps off the signals needed for a TTL monitor. But before you rush out and buy a TTL monitor, you might be interested in knowing that Atari made their own IBM TTL monitor, the PCM124. If you're a fanatic like myself, you might want to check out the amber PCM. Contact Best Electronics or B&C Computervisions for pricing on XEP-80's and PCM124's. Contact me in EMail if you just want the upgrade document.

Did you ever order a piece of

European software or maybe get one of those great demos from overseas, only to have it lock up or not run properly? Well, a fine gentleman named Niz Dazy in California, has come up with the solution. To upgrade your XE/XL to run European software, simply replace you current Antic chip with a PAL antic chip, and in the O.S. change location $C386 to $01 and location $C000 to $12. If you'd prefer to have this done for you, you can contact:

Niz Dazy
19185 Castlebay Lane
Northridge, CA. 91326

//// Atari 7800

On one of my trips to Ireland, I discovered a 7800 system with Asteroids built in to the console. Well, with a minor adjustment, you can put this special O.S. in your own 7800. Depending on what model 7800 you have (there were 3 types), it may be as easy as plugging in a chip. At worst, some simple, minor soldering needs to be done. The upgrade kit with all necessary parts is available from Best Electronics.

Also on the 7800 front, if you're a collector like myself, you'll want one of Atari's Nintendo style joypad controllers that they only released overseas. Again,
(Old Atari News Cont'd from Page 8)

these are available from Best.

//// Atari Lynx

I hope this is true. When I called Atari Customer Service the other day, I was told that Super Asteroids/Missile

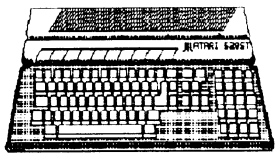
(Cont'd on Page 10)

MORRISON COMPUTERS
ORLANDO, FLORIDA
3761 SILVER STAR RD. ORLANDO, FLORIDA (407)295-6340

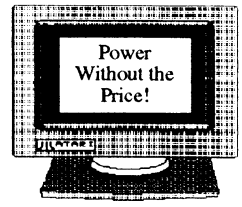
AUTHORIZED ATARI SALES AND SERVICE

Most 8-bit Software $5
ST software X-mas special! Priced 2 for 1

OVER 250 SOFTWARE TITLES!
COMPONENT LEVEL 8-BIT, 16 BIT ATARI, IBM, C64 REPAIRS
AUDIO REPAIRS ON YAMAHA, PEAVEY AND MORE.
MIDI APPLICATIONS SPECIALISTS
USED ITEMS
New R/C Aerochopper ST/PC/MAC $225.00
Complete Selection of ST Books and European Mags



The Falcon has LANDED!!!



JAGUAR™

Jaguar Preview:
BattleSphere Rules

By: Mark "Stingray" Santora

A little over six months ago, while I was on business in Los Angeles, I was fortunate enough to get a chance to meet and interview half of the 4Play team, Scott LeGrand and Stephanie Wukovitz. Recently, I traveled back to that fine city to find an apartment for myself as I am in the process of moving. While there I caught up with Scott and Stephanie again and managed to wrap my hands around a Jaguar controller so I could test fly the latest incarnation of their hot first game for the Jaguar, BattleSphere.

For those one or two readers of AEO who might not know what the plot of BattleSphere is, in the distant future several alien races, along with the earthers, decided that they were going to stop with their petty wars and have a one-time battle to see who would rule the universe. (Or their part of it.) They took their best ships and pilots and placed them in a section of space called the BattleSphere where they were to battle until only one remains. You are in a spacecraft of your choosing representing whichever lifeform you wish, battling for the destiny of your universe.

If you managed to see the game in motion on the AEO video from E3 and thought that was good, well things have changed. The game is now faster, smoother, has a killer AI (no pun intended), and even manages to have some really kickin' music. Did I mention that this game is on a cartridge?

Although the networking code was not running at the time when I played it, the game felt like it. Each ship moved with its own personality and depending on what ship you were in, could be a real pain to kill, if- they didn't get you first. And they did get me first, a lot of the times. My first BattleSphere tip: Remember to check your rear-view radar. It's there for a reason.

Each ship handles differently than another. The Starfire has great manueverability but the speed is not as great as the Castrator. Also the weapon power is varied depending on the different ships. There are your lasers, your mines (which are great when you just can't get thatcertain someone off your six!), your missles, your fire and forget missles (these are FUN!), and you stasis shots which render your target extremely vulnerable to attack as they can't move or fire! The game has a ton of playability. Even alone I can't imagine getting bored of this game. I was upset that I couldn't play it more!

Another fun part of the game was playing as a man floating in space. Yes, you can eject from your ship and float around space armed with a laser gun. Sort of like the end of Moonraker. What made this fun was seeing the spaceman get blown away as his body breaks apart and goes zooming past your cockpit - Arms and legs everywhere! It is quite humorous.

But there is more. There are the four different modes of gameplay. Aside from the all out brawls in the BattleSphere there is also a mode called Alone Against the Empire. This is going to play in a mode very similar to Star Raiders or X-wing. This was not up and running so I could not give it a runthrough, although from reading some of 4Play's posts on GEnie, I know it's going to be awesome.

While I was in LA, Scott was testing some new concepts in the game which he asked me about. When your ship is hit, it gets thrown a bit from

its trajectory. I liked this. I thought that it really added to the realism of the game. However, I pointed out that gaming mags would most likely hate it because it added a level of difficulty to the game and most reviewers don't spend more than an hour playing a game before drawing their final conclusions. My final suggestion was to place it as an option which people can modify from a control screen.

My only comparison to this fabulous game right now would have to be X-wing or Tie Fighter for the PC. Those two games are amazing simulators which have just enough of an arcade feeling to keep it interesting. While some people loved the old "Flight Simulator"s for the Atari 800/Apple II/C64, I couldn't stand them. They were so boring to me, and Battlesphere is nothing like that. Compared to X-wing, Battlesphere runs in 65000 colors (opposed to 256), has full stereo sampled rockin soundtrack (not what they used in X-wing), and it runs on a $149 game machine! A PC to play X-wing would cost you well over $1500 by the time you got it up and running.

In the end let me say this. The game is amazing now, and will be even better by the time it gets released. The =ONLY= drawback I can see for the game is that the Jaguar Control Pad isn't very condusive to 3D flight sim/action games. This game could really blow everything out of the water by the addition of an analog controller... which 4Play have said that they will code for. I can't wait for this game to get finished, and neither should you.

This game is scheduled to be available early in 1996.

****

bill baker says:

make a turkey happy,

renew your dues

buy some library disks

write an article for the

newsletter, and take a

club officer to dinner.

HAPPY

TURKEY DAY

EAT, DRINK

AND BURP!!

SO SAYS

BILL, RUSS,

JEFF &
DAVE!!!!

Command and Battlezone 2000 were in production. When I questioned the lady about in-store availability, she said they would be direct from Atari for $39.99 each.

That's all for now. As new items of interest appear, I'll post them here. Here's the vendor info:

Best Electronics 1-408-243-6950

B&C Computervisions 408-986-9960

=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=
// Day In, Day Out //
=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=

By: Ron Whittam

In this column I hope to foster communication and support for 8-bit and ST computer owners... presenting a positive and directive approach. This will help to strengthen the users group base and encourage the executive element.

If you have a question you would like to see answered, or a topic you

would like to see covered; send me an EMail!

If the topic of computer conversation isn't the Internet, it's about some new and innovative operating system. Recently Microsoft unleashed its newest creation on the world, Windows 95. I read a post on the Internet that touted the new functions of Win95, such as the multitasking changes, the file manager, plug and play, and other nifty features, the author summed it up with, Bill, Welcome to 1985."Yes, 1985 technology has finally made it to the masses. Back in 1985, ten years ago, s imilar technology was utilized by Digital Research, Atari, Commodore, and Apple (and lately, even IBM). But it took a media-using company like Microsoft to sell it on a world-wide scale.

//// It's All in the Wrist

The developers on the Atari platform have not stopped developing newer and more innovative software packages and system enhancements. These programs will even run on computers purchased in 1985. You can't say that about Microsoft's accomplishment. A few of these new operating systems and operating system enhancements have been quietly reported in the few Atari magazines available on the market: MagiC and EASE multi-tasking OS; Geneva - Multi-tasking, and NeoDesk; AtariNOS Atari TCP/IP; MiNTOS UNIX-like environment; MultiTOS- Atari's GEM multitasking OS based on MiNT; OMEn cross-platform multitasking system, and others. These are designed to meet the needs of the 1990's and beyond.

Hardware devices like 4x CD ROMs, scanners, multi-sync monitors, high-speed modems, MIDI components, and other devices can be easily connected to the Atari computer (even the older Atari ST, circa 1985). Recently, I was called upon to install software on an IBM PS/2 computer. The person called me because I had spent a few hours, years before, showing them how to use their Atari. While fixing the configuration and getting the word processing program tweeked to runefficently, I was asked, Why do you like Atari computers so much when you know so much about IBM compatables?"(I wondered if this was a trick question). I responded by pointing out that I liked the ease of use and the functional aspects of the Atari. I mentioned, for instance, this new HP printer you have just bought can be hooked up to your Atari, and your current Atari programs can print to it."She was surprised. One reason they bought the IBM computer was because they bought the new printer. They didn't think an old computer would work with it.

Running quality software is easy. Most freeware and shareware products on the Atari platform rival the commercial offerings on any other computer platform. Some argue that the Public Domain (PD) databases (free and shareware programs) of other platforms have so many more programs then PD databases on the Atari platform. This may be true. I have waded through (and download) many useless or inadequate programs from those "other"databases. When trying to find a what your looking for in an Atari PD database, you don't need to look far. Most every program will not only do what you need done, it will usually do even more.

//// Reality Check

Ok, ok. You are thinking, he's preaching to the choir."Not so. I have run across Atari users who are keeping their Atari and using it with a great deal of "other-platform"envy. but who can't afford to make the cross-over. I am here to say, you don't need to. For a lot less money, you can purchase commercial or shareware Atari programs and commercial hardware enhancements to make your Atari the envy of your IBM touting friends. You can feel confident that you have a quality machine that can get the job done."

I was also asked, by the forementioned person, why I spent so much time consulting personal and business home computer owners who had IBM compatable machines, and so little time with Atari owners. Aside from the ratio factor, IBM types need the help Atari owners don't. Atari owners, however, need information. We always seem to know what is happening in the other realm because of News, media-hype, advertising, and the like. But Atari owners, like this solitary school teacher, are often in the dark"about the advancements of the Atari platform. They believe the Atari they own is obsolete and not usable. They become very surprised at the notion that it is not. And are often awestruck at the proof. In my last article, I mentioned a PC user group officer to whom I showed an Atari TT during a swapmeet. He said he thought Atari had disolved and that they had only made game machines (he still had one). He was unaware of the Atari ST, STE, TT, and Falcon series of computers. The Eagle advertisements we were handing out shocked his socks off.

As a user group member (if you are not one, be one - if you don't have a user group - start one), the dissemination of information and instruction of the masses falls toyou. Recently, two of our user group member's letters to the editor (about Atari computers) have been printed in the local paper. Our user group editor makes frequent contributions to a local computer rag called, Computer Solutions. We are doing what we can in our corner of the world. Do what YOU can in yours.

//// Doing it Right

There are ways to go about doing this. Be innovative. Have direction.First, find other Atari computer owners. A year ago, we went on a campaign to locate the 1,000 people who had bought Atari computers from one computer store in the Boise area during the 1980's. We dropped off our newsletter at computer stores, bookstores that carried computer books, computer repair shops and electrical outlet stores, and anywhere else we could find. Some of our members scanned the classified ads for Atari computers being sold. They would drop by the seller. They asked the seller to give the new buyer a newsletter and user group information. We sold used Atari equipment we salvaged from a school warehouse. Our members fixed and repaired what we could and sold them for a fair price. The buyers were invited to the user

(Continued on Page 12 ------>)

(Cont. from page 11)

group (free one year membership with purchase).

An easy, simple, and cost effective method is a business card. Use a few dollars from the user group treasury to make a business card that can be used to advertize your user group. Pin them up on bulletin boards in your city (shopping centers, grocery stores, and the like have public bulletin boards for this purpose). The business card ad should be simple yet complete. Announcing your group's name, the meeting place and time, a means of getting hold of the officers, an Internet address and web page URL, and any other significant information.

If you have some innovative ideas your group has done (or ideas you would like to see done), please send them to <explorer.4@genie.com>. I will include them in the up and coming issues of AEO.

//// A Few Interesting Places on the 'Net

http://www.futurenet.co.uk is the Web site of Future Publishing and the ST FORMAT magazine. <75300.3443@mpuserve.com> is Sam Tramiel's EMail address. http://www.mcc.ac.uk/~dlms/atari.html is the famous Atari Web Page by Mark Smith. http://www.atari.com/ is the Web site address for some company....

If your user group has a web page, BBS, or an E-mail address, send me the information at <explorer.4@genie.com> and I will help get the word out.

//// Send it in

Don't forget to send in the registration for that shareware program you have been using. The developer deserves the cash. Hours of time lost from family and friends were required to produce that program. And don't forget programmers need to eat, too. If you use Atari computer shareware programs, make a significant contribution to the Atari platform by contributing to the programmers who are still developing products for you.

Here's an idea: Get the members of your user group together. Find out which shareware programs you are using (and have not paid for). Pool your resources and do a mass registration. You pay for one postage stamp and one cheque or money order. This will benifit both your group and the programmer. Better yet, pick one shareware programmer a month, and do this each month until the products your members are using have been paid for. This will ease the impact on the pocketbook and support the Atari programmers at the same time.

Speak up!

If you are supporting the Atari platform, send me a brief bio and how you can be contacted.

Until next time...

(Editor's Note: Ron Whittam is the President of the Atari Boise Users Group, runs a part-time consulting business called StraighLOGIC!, and is a Customer Support Specialist for a small software firm in Boise, Idaho. He can be contacted on GEnie Mail (EXPLORER.4), on the Internet at <whittam@primenet.com>, or on ApC BBS (208-362-1790). And see the web page at "//www.primenet.com/~whittam/atari.html"as well as StraighLOGIC!'s web page at "//www.primenet.com/~whittam/slogic.html")

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THE MEADMEISTER SPEAKS

To : All
From : MECHANIC
Subj : updates

(Editor's note: Congratulations to Gail Kindstrom aka Mechanic in BBS land. Why concratulations, well read on.....)

Update number one: My Cherry Mead was racked 9/30/95 and was down to a gravity of 1.006 from a staring gravity of 1.100. It is very clear was a good nose and mild cherry taste. The 13% achl. does not bite through the taste and smell. So far very well rounded.

I have a Lemon and Vanilla mead using wild flower honey fermenting at a steady pace. Started at 1.100 but have not taken any readings in the last month.

Well tonight 10/1/95 factory reps from Samuel Adams gave us some tastings and info on a couple of their brews. The Sam Adams Scotch Ale starts at 1.086 and has an alch. of 8.6%. The sweetness and malt does a real good job of hiding the 8.6 and the label does not have the by volume.

Next but not least the Home Brewers Club got a tasting of the 1995 Samuel Adams Triple Bock. It was not as sweet as 1994 and had more of an alch. bite that crawled up your nose. Everyone one at the club said that it was nice but would be much better in about 2 years.

The Home Brew Club also has sent 110 entries to the Huston Texas Dixie Cup home brew event. The Club had a hand full of first and second in several events in the last month with 2 best of shows in the last 4 events. Yes home brewed beer is better than most commercial beer.

(Editor's Note: What modest Gail didn't say was that his Club WON. Ask Gail for the details. WELL DONE, my friend....)

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ATARI 8-BIT DISK OF THE MONTH
October 1995

by Jeff Potter
MFACC 8-Bit Librarian

This month I've been spending my spare time looking at music composer programs for the Atari 8-bit. I've gotten ahold of copies of some of the newer ones from European programmers that are definitely worth talking about. I'll warn you ahead of time, I have little or no musical background. So don't expect me to show up with

any impressive compositions of my own.

These programs have a common theme running through them. A large amount of western music has a great deal of redundancy in it, as far as melodies and themes that recur at various times. Rather than code a composition as a straight line from beginning to end (as most Atari music programs seem to), you can build them up in sections. But even that explanation is getting ahead of my point.

These programs all have an instrument creation/editing capability. Rather than representing all notes as on/off, you can edit the volume and distortion profile. This means your instruments can start out loud and trail off slowly or quickly, or even with reverberation. You can create pure notes, or simulate raspy guitars through the use of distortion. With some programs you can mix the two, giving a drum sound that sounds a brief musical note in the beginning. Some allow vibrato and tremolo effects. During instrument editing you can try them out by typing notes on the keyboard (usually arranged roughly like a piano). You can build a selection of instruments (usually at least 20 different ones) which you can call upon in the next part.

You can then move to a pattern editor. Here you can build melodies of single voices (which can switch instruments in mid-pattern). The "standard" method works in whole notes, quarter notes, and sixteenths, and the pattern runs for the duration of four whole notes. You build these patterns usually by typing on the keyboard (again, arranged like a piano with one or two octaves) somewhat interactively, listening as the notes are recorded. You can easily switch instruments and octaves, and play the entire pattern or pieces of it. You can usually clear the patterns in one step, and copy patterns from one to another. You can create two or three dozen patterns, each with their own "pattern number."

The third step lets you put together your composition. For each of the three or four voices, you can select the pattern it plays by entering the pattern number. This continues for as many steps as you care to (I've seen one over 80 measures long). Some programs allow you to enter tempo changes, key changes, repeats, etc. You can replay the whole composition, or portions of it.

That's the gist of these programs, I'll cover the differences and special features of them below.

SOUND MONITOR 1.2

Sound Monitor (SMON) is the only public domain program of the set. It has fairly good capabilities, and I have a good selecton of representative songs. A shortcoming of it is that during replay, the screen jumps horribly, since it was written for 50 Hz PAL Ataris. Another drawback is that it is written in German (by Torsten Karwoth I believe), so all of the on-screen text is in that language. I have a text file that describes what one English-speaking user (Shawn Poulson) has discovered by playing with the program.

Despite the drawbacks, it has instrument creation, pattern editing, and song editing capabilities like the description above. You can edit four patterns at once, if you're of the mind to. Volume changes, note by note, are also easily handled.

The program also includes some assembly language player routines that make it easy to use in other programs.

SOUND MONITOR 1.8

This program, although named the same, has very little relationship in appearance and use to SMON 1.2. It even appears to be written by another programmer.

Most editing can be done from the main screen, and changing to other screens is done with control keys. This one is also odd in that it appears to be able to record your keystrokes for one track while you replay the other three from memory. I couldn't make much use of this, as I mentioned I have little or no muscial ability. It also allows you to enter notes one at a time interactively (but tediously). You can easily select "tape loops" of sections to repeat over and over to verify you got the melody correct.

Apparently there exists a "Sound Monitor Professional" with even more capabilities, but I have yet to see a copy of it.

CHAOS MUSIC COMPOSER

This composer, known as CMC, appears to have a big following in Europe. I believe I included a demo of music created by it in a past disk of the month (CMCDEMO.COM). It's a very user-friendly program, where you work in three different areas of the screen. The characters and the graphics are really well-done, and the sound quality is great.

In the instrument creation window, it provides about 30 different "built-in" instruments as starting points. You can also create your own, of course. You can simulate loud and quiet playing by creating loud and quiet versions of the same instruments. You can also have instruments whose frequencies ramp up or down.

Pattern creation is like my general description, as is song creation. Repeats and tempo changes are possible during song creation. You can save your compositions to disk, and then save an auto-player that works in BASIC or assembly language. This lets you create musical backgrounds for your own programs.

I have a good selection of songs created with CMC, and I'm quite impressed with the quality of sound users have gotten from it. Some make you ask yourself, "How did they do that?" By using the editor I was able to dissect some of their songs. You can replay them at a slower tempo, or play single patterns without the accompaniment. Some of the composers are very clever, and use short sequences of notes to simulate the effects that musicians can accomplish on their instruments in live performances.

CMC is a commercial product, apparently costing 12.5 Dutch gilders (don't ask me for the monetary conversion). A "Stereo" version of this also exists, for those who have added a second POKEY chip to their Ataris.

DELTA1V6

This appears to be a work in progress, by a programmer who goes by the nickname of Konop. The instrument, pattern, and song editors are similar to CMC and the others. But he adds the capability to transpose instruments and patterns easily. So you can record a pattern and play it in different chords. You can also have fine control over the instruments' frequency profile. In his one included example, the instruments are made to seemingly modulate between two or three notes, making some interesting results.

BLACK MAGIC COMPOSER

This seems to be the most polished of all the programs out there. The user interface looks like a Windows GUI, using the joystick and a player/missile cursor. Pull-down menus at the top of the screen let you save and load songs, activate special features, and compress your songs. Icons at the bottom bring up editing windows for entering data.

Unfortunately I only have a copy of the program and not the documentation, so I can't comment on how easy it is to use. But one great feature I've gathered from listening to the music (and have heard reported elsewhere) is that this program lets you integrate sampled sounds with regularly POKEY-produced sounds. So you can get great sounding drums, and even flutes(!).

One drawback of Black Magic is that it only works on PAL Ataris (remember I told how I converted mine a few months ago).

The Atari 8-bit has some pretty powerful (for its time) sound capabilities, and can really show its stuff when the different modes of operation are harnessed for music composing.

OTHER NEWS

Freddy Offenga, a.k.a. Frankenstein of the High Tech Team, has declared that his disk magazine Megazine"will be in the public domain. I contacted him via the Internet, and he says he will be releasing new versions for including in club libraries like ours. I have some of these, and I'm quite impressed. Each one includes about a dozen articles, of which two or three are programming tips. Other articles are about game Easter Eggs," reviews of software, jokes (missing something in the translation), and even heavy metal. Besides the articles, they usually include a couple demos, maybe a game, and some source code.

One warning about these: some of them contain occasional profanity, at least the versions released previously. Also, some disks were PAL only, and worked fairly unreliably on NTSC Ataris. I'll check the disks out for the club w.r.t. the above two matters, and rate them accordingly.

Mike Hohman has taken a lot of heat lately on the nets. It seems he released a bad batch of Sparta DOS X 4.22 PROMs before leaving for California over a month ago. He returned to find a bunch of angry emails, and has pledged to set everything right.

I did check into procuring James King's Atari 8-bit CD. He apparently has five left for sale or trade. They are in ISO9660 (High Sierra) format, so any PC, Macintosh, or Atari ST can read them. They contain over 100 meg of files, which he claims contains virtually everything that is present on GEnie, CompuServe, Delphi, and the University of Michigan archive. The sad point is that Jim is also including copyrighted commercial software that he has no right to distribute. So, according to the by-laws of our club, we cannot purchased this pirated software, and do not condone this venture.

And so ends another monthly column. As always, I'm open for suggestions on future themes for 8-bit DOMs. Drop me a line on Bob's Inner Core BBS, or write me at:

202 Chestnut Ridge St.
Winter Springs, FL 32708

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The libraries and librarians thank you for your past support. However, we need new contributions to the library for Disk's of The Month, Demo's, sales and also to help members increase their personal libraries.

The Atari 8-Bit and ST platforms are with us for a long time and there is software for them. Why not share through the Mid-Florida Atari Computer Club's Library? The costs for a full disk of either 8-Bit or ST programs is nominal, only a dollar if you supply the disk and $1.50 if you wish the librarians to supply the disk to you. This cost is far below other clubs and commercial Public Domain and Shareware providers. This is the season of giving, won't you give something to the 8 Bit and ST libraries???

This newsletter wishes to extend to Jeff Potter and Bob Smith, our 8 Bit and ST Librarians respectively, the thanks for a job above and beyond the call of duty.

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This space for rent!!! Your article can go very nicely right here. Any article will do, nothing fancy and something informative. Remember, your article is wanted. Contact this newsletter for details!!!!

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

AT&T and Cirrus Form Chip Venture

AT&T Microelectronics and Cirrus Logic Inc. have announced a $600 million joint chip manufacturing venture. The companies plan to make a variety of advanced integrated circuits for use in computers, cellular phones, and other electronic devices. The project will operate in a newly constructed clean room within an existing AT&T semiconductor fabrication facility in Orlando, Florida. The venture, which will be owned 60 percent by AT&T and 40 percent by Cirrus, is slated to begin production by early 1997. The companies will equally share production capacity, which will focus initially on the 0.35-micron processing of silicon wafers. The venture's business plan calls for an eventual migration to a 0.25-micron process.

AT&T and Cirrus say the venture will operate as a separate entity through a five-member board of directors, with three directors from AT&T and two from Cirrus. The venture will be named before it begins operation. The project is expected to create about 600 new jobs.

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US Robotics Makes Offer for Hayes

US Robotics Corp. has offered to acquire Hayes Microcomputer Products Inc. As part of the deal, U.S. Robotics would pay its rival's debts and add nearly $100 million of its own stock, reports the Associated Press. Such an arrangement would solidify the role of US Robotics in the modem market. Long recognized as setting the technical standard in modem design, Hayes has been reorganizing in Chapter 11 of federal bankruptcy laws since last fall. It owes creditors about $60 million to $85 million. US Robotics announced it has submitted a bid to Hayes' unsecured creditors, following a procedure set out in the bankruptcy court. It also offered payment of creditors' claims with interest and up to $97.5 million of its stock, notes AP. Such a transaction would have to be approved by U.S. Bankruptcy Judge Hugh Robinson, who is presiding over the Hayes reorganization.

Hayes, which had no immediate comment on the offer, is a private, Atlanta, Georgia-based company that is chiefly owned by its chairman, Dennis C. Hayes. Earlier this year, Hayes reached a tentative agreement to be purchased by Boca Research, another maker of communications products for computers, but the deal fell through. Meanwhile, AP reports that Hayes ha been proceeding with its own restructuring proposal, the core of which was approved by the bankruptcy court in May. The company had $270 million in sales last year.

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Hayes Bids to Remain Independent

Intent on remaining independent, modem maker Hayes Microcomputer Products Inc. has launched a plan under which it will received $35 million in equity investment. However, Hayes CEO Dennis C. Hayes has told reporter Mark Boslet of the Dow Jones News Service he doesn't see suitors Diamond Multimedia Systems Inc. and US Robotics Corp. abandoning their attempts to buy the company. Hayes told the wire serv ice the $35 million from Northern Telecom Ltd. and Singapore-based ACMA Ltd. combined with a $50 million to $60 million credit facility from two financial institutions will enable Hayes to re-emerge from bankruptcy. The U.S. Bankruptcy Court in Atlanta has scheduled a Dec. 18 confirmation hearing on the plan. But I think (US Robotics and Diamond Multimedia) will try to make a run at it, Hayes added, since they have publicly expressed their interest in the ompany. He added, though, that market leader US Robotics may run into regulatory hurdles if it seeks government approval for such a purchase. Northern Telecom and ACMA each will receive 24.5 percent interest in Hayes in exchange for their investment, DJNS says. Hayes told Boslet that after paying creditors with interest (estimated at about $85 million), his independent firm will have enough cash to operate, which leaves us in a reasonable position. Hayes also said:

●

The turnaround in his $300 milliona-year modem business has continued saying the firm has seen an substantial improvement in its operating profits. His plan to keep the company independent calls for the hiring of a chief operation officer and that the hiring process is underway.

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SoftKey Plans Acquisitions

SoftKey International Inc. says it plans to acquire Minnesota Educational Computing Corp. (MECC) in a stock swap deal valued at $370 million. MECC specializes in educational software. Softkey, based in Cambridge, Massachusetts, publishes a wide array of consumer software titles. In a separate move, Softkey is marking a hostile $606 million bid for The Learning Co., an educational software publisher that has already agreed to be acquired by Broderbund Software Inc. The Learning Co.'s titles include Reader Rabbit and Math Rabbit. There is no overlap in the MECC product mix with SoftKey's," says Kevin O'Leary, SoftKey's president. This further enhances SoftKey's shelf space in retail with proprietary brand name educational titles in math, social studies, language arts and science."

Adds Michael Perik, SoftKey' CEO, MECC is a leading developer in the educational software market with over 190 titles such as Oregon Trail II. It will be a great asset for SoftKey." Notes Dale E. LaFrenz, MECC's president and CEO, This merger provides MECC with very significant opportunities to leverage its position in both the school and home educational software markets." The MECC transaction is subject to several conditions, including stockholder and government approvals.

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(Cont. on Page 16 ==========>)

(FYI Cont'd)

Report Calls for I-Way Safeguards

A new government study says safeguards must be built into the information superhighway to keep Americans' personal information private. Concerns about safeguarding privacy will likely grow as the (information superhighway) becomes a pervasive, functioning reality,"states the Commerce Department white paper report. It notes that the Internet and other data, voice, and video services will be used for commerce in a wide range of areas, including banking, entertainment, education, recreation, and health care in the years ahead. These transactions, by their very execution ... create electronic records which are easily stored and processed,"says the study.

The 28-page report says companies on the information superhighway should voluntarily notify consumers about the implications of the personal data being collected and obtain users' permission before distributing it. Failing voluntary compliance, "government action will be needed to safeguard the legitimate privacy interests of American consumers," warns the report. The report notes that the average American's name appears on 100 mailing lists and 50 electronic databases.

House, Senate Finalize Telecom Bill

Negotiators from the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate are meeting this week for the first time to iron out differences on a bill that would rewrite telecommunications laws in the United States. Reuter correspondent Roger Fillion reports from Washington, D.C., that the negotiators hope to send a final bill to President Clinton by the end of the year. The two bodies of Congress overwhelmingly passed similar pieces of legislation that would unleash competition among the telephone, cable, and broadcast industries. The bills represent the biggest rewrite of communications law in 60 years.

Any compromise bill agreed to by the 45 lawmakers on the conference panel must also be approved by both chambers of Congress and signed by President Clinton, who has threatened to veto the legislation as now worded in the House and Senate bills. Our bills are close,"said Rep. Thomas Bliley, a Virginia Republican. We should be able to work it out in a timely fashion and present a bill to the president that he will sign."

Reuters notes that some of the major sticking points that could trigger a veto are provisions to allow media companies to own more television stations, cable companies and newspapers, as well as language to deregulate cable TV rates. The bills also would scrap legal barriers so local and long-distance phone and cable companies could invade each others' markets.

Those opposing the legislation say it would raise phone and cable ratesand promote monopoly power in the media business. But supporters disagree, insisting it will give consumers a greater choice of services, more competition, and lower rates.

Study Finds Computer Crime Rising

A new survey of 200 businesses across the nation has found more than 90 percent of the firms responding have been victims of computer crime. And 43.3 percent of these had been computer crime victims at least 25 times. The study conducted by Michigan State University criminal justice professor David Carter and research assistant Andra Katz "showed substantial increases in the introduction of computer viruses into company machines and harassment of employees through computer network communications," says a statement from East Lansing, Michigan. Also, the study found the most common thefts were committed by employees and contract workers, but it noted a "significant increase in computer hackers." Carter commented in the statement, This will undoubtedly grow with the increased numbers of computers, more networking and wider computer literacy. There is also an increasing threat of computer crime from organized crime groups from Eastern Europe." He added it is difficult to put a dollar figure on many of the thefts because they represent "intellectual property such as client lists and pricing information.

The statement noted, though, that the British Banking Association recently estimated computer fraud is costing $8 billion a year or $22.4 million a day. The Michigan study projects the average business fraud is $23,000 while the average business fraud involving computers is $500,000. The study found the most common computer-related abuses by the respondents were:

Credit card fraud, 96.6 percent.
Telecommunications fraud, 96.6 percent.
Employee use of company computer equipment for personal reasons, 96 percent.
Unauthorized access to computer files for snooping, 95.1 percent.
Cellular phone fraud, 94.5 percent.
Unlawful copying of copyrighted or licensed software, 91.2 percent.

The most dramatic increases over the past five years were:

Theft or attempted theft of client or customer information, 81 percent.
Theft or attempted theft of trade secrets, 77.6 percent.
Theft or attempted theft of new product plans, 76.7 percent.
Theft or attempted theft of product descriptions, 75.7 percent.
Unauthorized computer access to confidential employee information, 74.5 percent.
Unauthorized computer access to confidential business information, 74.4 percent.
Theft or attempted theft of money, 72.2 percent.
Theft or attempted theft of product pricing data, 71.8 percent.

(Continued on Page 17 ==========>)

The research suggested a two- step approach to protecting against technology related crime:

1. Address physical security issues, including training employees who use computers about their responsibilities and security related issues, and controlling access to computers.

2. Address operations security, including training, screening personnel, supervision, systems monitoring, compartmentalizing critical information, cryptography and password changes on a regular basis.

Online Libel Case Resolved

Prodigy Services Co. says it has reached an agreement in a closely watched libel case that could lead to a ruling that online providers are not responsible for the content on their services. The Reuter news service reports that the anticipated ruling could have enormous impact on the online field and on companies offering personal computer users access to the Internet. Prodigy had been sued for libel by Stratton Oakmont Inc., a small brokerage firm, which alleged that it had been libeled by an unknown Prodigy member in messages about it on a Prodigy bulletin board. The judge ruled in May that Prodigy, as a publisher, could be held liable for statements posted on its bulletin boards.

Now, Prodigy says it and Stratton Oakmont have reached an agreement that could lead to the judge reversing his ruling. The two sides are in agreement," a Prodigy spokesman told Reuters. This paves the way for the judge to reverse his judgment and then dismiss the case."

Cyber Kids May Watch Less TV

A new telephone survey says children who can use a computer at home watch slightly less television. And the poll of 1,200 families conducted earlier this year on behalf of a score of U.S. computer, media, and learning enterprises also found that initially girls spend more time at the keyboards than boys, but that by seventh grade, boys overtake girls.

Vice President Tom Miller of Find SVP, a consulting company that performed the study in association with Grunwald Associates, told the Associated Press that four out of 10 households surveyed had PCs and reported children averaging 11.9 hours of TV a week, compared with 12.8 hours in computerless homes.

Other findings:

From pre-kindergarten through third grade, girls use computers an average of 9.6 hours a week, boys 6.6 hours. In fourth through sixth grades, girls drop to 8.9 hours and boys increase to 7.2.

In seventh and eighth grades, boys put in 12.4 hours at terminals to 11 hours for girls. In high school, it is 12.3 hours for boys and 10 hours for girls.

They start out spending more time playing games, but that changes as homework increases.

In the early grades, boys do homework on computers for about three quarters of an hour a week; girls less than less than half an hour, the study found. By high school, boys are doing 3.4 hours of homework on computers and girls 4.5 hours.

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Rare Gems
by: David A. Wright

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The following are the Rare Gems (sm)"selections for September 10 to 16, 1995. Rare Gems"is a service mark (sm) of Rare Breed Noninc. and David Alan Wright. (Internet: SF-CENTAUR@ENIE.COM) Compilation copyright 1995 by same. All Wright's rights reserved. Each weekly collection may be distributed freely as long as this notice is retained. No other format may be distributed without further authorization. All quotes covered by fair use"of copyright law. To avoid eye strain, do not look directly into the screen. --:Dave

They use these things to wash themselves sort of like giant, synthetic tongues. Cat about washcloths, Bizarro" strip by Dan Piraro

Are you then unable to recognize a sob unless it has the same sound as yours? --Andre Gidre

Grey is a color that always seems on the eve of changing to some other color. --G. K. Chesterton

The art of the clown is more profound than we think; it is neither tragic nor comic. It is the comic mirror of tragedy and the tragic mirror of comedy. --Andre Suares

Rain does not fall on one roof alone.-Camaroon proverb

Your own safety is at stake when your neighbor's wall is ablaze. --Horace

I am a part of all that I have met.
Ulysses"by Alfred, Lord Tennyson

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The following are the Rare Gems (sm)"selections for

(Continued on Page 18=========>)

(Rare Gems Continued)

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Porsche recommends you obey all traffic laws. --:Dave

If you smoke on the premises, we shall assume you are on fire and treat you accordingly. --Unknown

I am the inferior of any man whose rights I trample underfoot. --Horace Greeley

Cats are magical. The more you pet them the longer you both live. --Unknown

He who must needs have company, must needs have sometimes bad company. --Sir Thomas Browne

An agreeable companion on a journey is as good as a carriage. --Publilius Syrus

The man with a toothache thinks everyone happy whose teeth are sound. The poverty-stricken man makes the same mistake about the rich man.
George Bernard Shaw

It is in the blood of genius to love play for its own sake, and whether one uses one's skill on thrones or women, swords or pens, gold or fame, the game's the thing. --Gelett Burgess

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Failsafe pickup: Smile if you want to sleep with me." And watch them try to hold back their laugh. --Unknown

It is as fatal as it is cowardly to blink (at) facts because they are not to our taste. --John Tyndall

Yeah, but when I saw how much faster it got our older guys on-line, I realized what a savings in technological training cyberporn is. /
Manager, Non Sequitur"strip by Wiley Miller

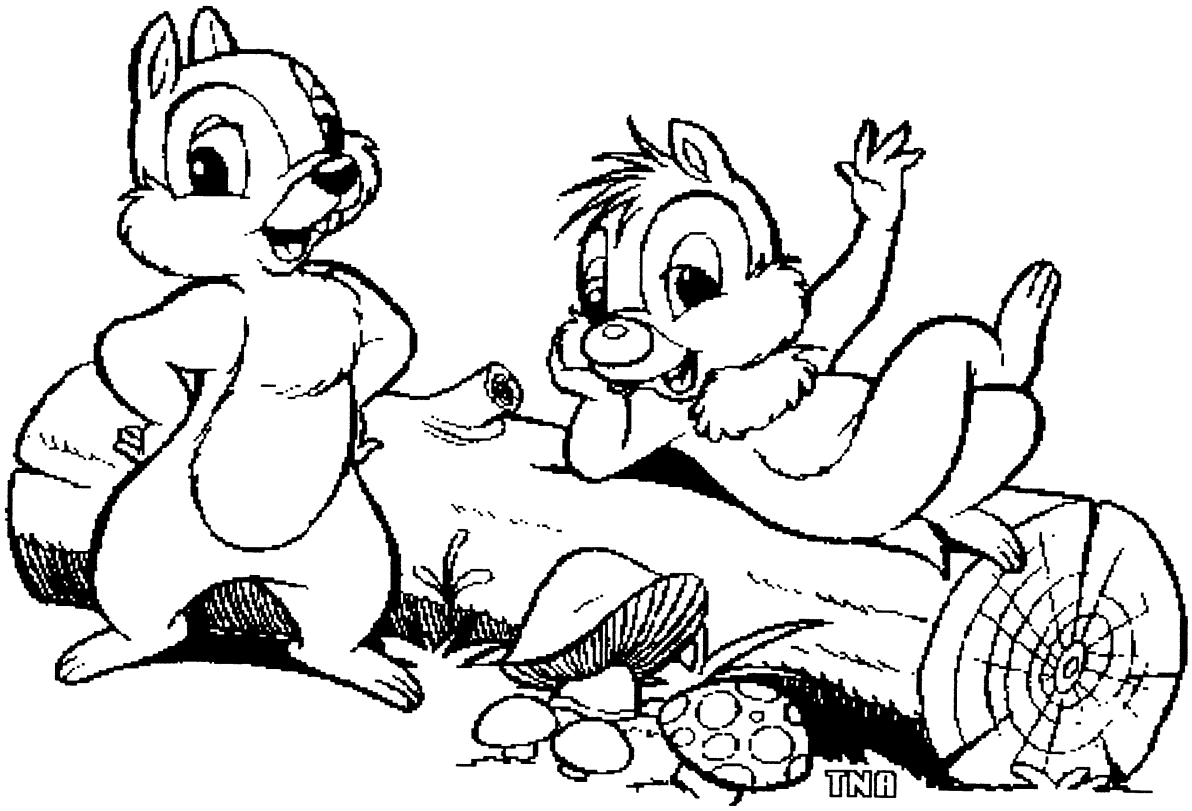
Never hit your Grandma with a shovel,
It makes a bad impression on her mind. --Unknown

When you want to test the depths of a stream, don't use both feet.
--Chinese proverb

The measure of a truly great man is the courtesy with which he treats
lesser men. --Unknown

To me, being an intellectual doesn't mean knowing about intellectual
issues; it means taking pleasure in them. --Jacob Bronowski

CHIP & DALE WISH EVERYONE



A HAPPY THANKSGIVING!!!!!!